

THE ENGLISH GIRL.

A VERY CRITICAL CORRESPONDENT
INDULGES IN FAULT-FINDING.The Girl of the "Upper Middle Class"—
Intellectual Sluggishness—Carrying on
a Conversation—Trained in the
Elements of Housekeeping.

[London Cor. Pioneer Press.]

Of course in England, as elsewhere, there are girls and girls. I confine my remarks to the average girl, the girl of the middle classes, or let us say, "the upper middle classes." For in this very conservative country, where the caste divisions are as strongly defined as in India or China, there are an upper middle class, a "lower middle class," and (I suppose) a "middle middle class," though of this latter I am not quite decided. At any rate they don't call it by that name exactly. The most predominant trait of this English girl, the one characteristic common to all of them without exception, is the determination to marry. Other girls in all lands marry, other girls think of "beau" and "sweethearts" as soon as they get into long dresses—many of them before; other girls are ambitious to write "Mrs." before their names, but in no land that I have ever visited do the young women make such "dead sets" at all marriageable young (or old) men who come within the focus of their attractions.

Another characteristic of the middle class English girl is that of intellectual sluggishness. In comparison with an American girl of like social position, similar advantages, similar opportunities for education and mental improvement, similar condition of fortune, the English girl is a poor talker and a feeble reader. By "feeble reader" I mean a girl who has in her school days read only those works which were given her as tasks, and who, since leaving school, has confined her reading to the newspapers and works of fiction. The great majority of English girls, at least those whom I meet, have never read any prominent English novel save Shakespeare, Tennyson and Mrs. Browning; know very little of any French authors save Victor Hugo and the horde of sensationalists covetously headed by Zola, Gaboriau and Boisgobey, and as for American writers they are absolutely ignorant of them.

I know of few things more ennuysome, more homelike, than the attempt to carry on conversation during an hour with an average "middle class" English girl. I mean a girl who is fairly well educated, gifted with average intelligence, a graduate of any good English seminary or "women's college." A half-hour of such conversation uses me up completely, to say the least, and I am glad to get away. I like their faces, I admire their good figures, their robust strength, their fresh bloom of youth, (not manufactured by Mrs. Allen!) I am enthusiastic over their lawn tennis playing and their tricycle riding. I like their gait, the way they "step out," no girl walks so well as the English girl. I can never cease to praise their economy, in and out of the house, (with certain exceptions, of course!) but I do not like their talk and I am bored constantly by their conversation.

English "middle class" girls are very religious. At least they seem to be. Enter any church in London, save only those in "the city," which are necessarily almost deserted, except the Temple church, because scarcely anybody save a few porters, housekeepers, "care takers," and the like, live in "the city"—enter any church in London on a Sunday morning or at the afternoon service, and you find the seats crowded with ladies, the greatest part being young women or misses. They are devout; they go through the service with decorum and all the outward evidences of respect and religious devotion. No staring about the edifice here, as in an Italian cathedral, where the worshiper counts her beads and at the same time studies the countenances of all those within range of her vision; no critical examination of the new bonnet of her neighbor or study of the trimming on the mantle of the lady in the next pew, as in a New York or a Chicago house of worship.

English girls of the middle class usually make good housewives. They are trained in the elements of housekeeping, and oftentimes have much more than an "elementary knowledge" of household duties. They usually make their own dresses—perhaps that is the reason that they are so apt to be ill-made, or, at least, not tasteful—they know how to trim their own bonnets, they can cook a beefsteak and make a "Yorkshire pudding." They can usually tell you how many pounds of sugar go to a pound of fruit in the compounding of an A. 1 strawberry jam. Many of them can even handle a smoothing iron, though in London nearly all laundry work is done by professional laundresses, most of it out of the house. They do not drink ice water, and that is one respect in which they display a superiority over their American cousins, male and female alike.

English girls (always of the "upper middle classes") lack expression. Their countenances are too stolid. In fact, I have good reason for believing that the English girl is not very emotional—that she lacks "sentiment." "Sentiment" is understood by us Americans. This is seen in her singing, in the way she phrases a song or warbles an aria. She usually—save only in the case of those singers who have studied under Italian or French professors—delivers a song in a cold, unimpassioned manner, utterly devoid of expression, the French and Italians understand that word in its application to music. The English considers it "affected" to sing with expression. According to their ideas, it is "stagey" and "theatrical" to move the hands, make any gestures whatever, or even lift the eyes heavenward when one is singing. They pride themselves greatly upon "never manifesting emotion." This trait is even more noticeable among the "upper classes," or "the aristocracy." The cool, "well-bred" stars of an aristocratic English dame in society is something well worth seeing. It is something that will cling to your memory for months, perhaps years, afterward.

Bismarck's Land Grants.

[London Times.]

The geographical society of Hamburg has published a memorandum showing the territorial extent of the recent German annexations in the Pacific ocean. It is necessary to bear in mind that the German geographical square mile is sixteen times as large as the geographical square mile of English geographers. Hence the German estimate will all have to be multiplied by sixteen to reduce them to our measurements. Kaiser Wilhelm's Land (German New Guinea), 8,235.5 German geographical square miles; New Ireland, 212.3 square miles; New Britain, 584.3 square miles; the Bismarck archipelago, 947.6 square miles; in all, 4,044.5 German geographical square miles, equal to about 65,512 of our ordinary geographical square miles. The same authority estimates the area of New Guinea taken under British protection at 4,044.89 German geographical square miles, or almost the same as the total of the German annexations in the Pacific.

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The steamer Kinau will make the VOLCANO TRIP, reaching Keauhou on Wednesday morning, giving tourists two days and two nights at the VOLCANO HOUSE.

When the 8th and 22d of the month fall on Monday, the Kinau will leave that day.

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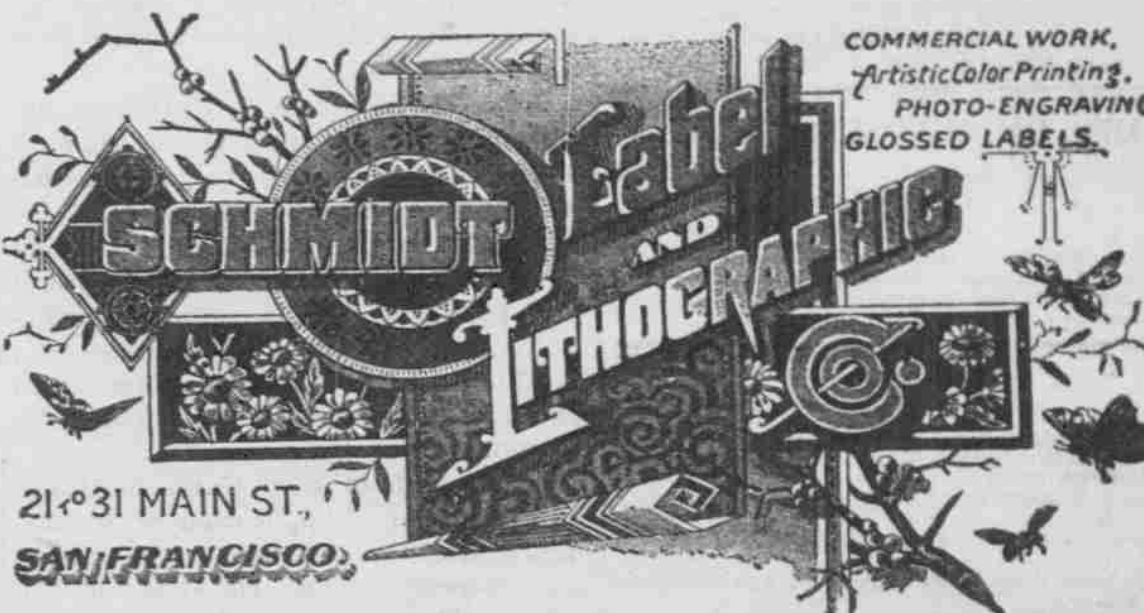
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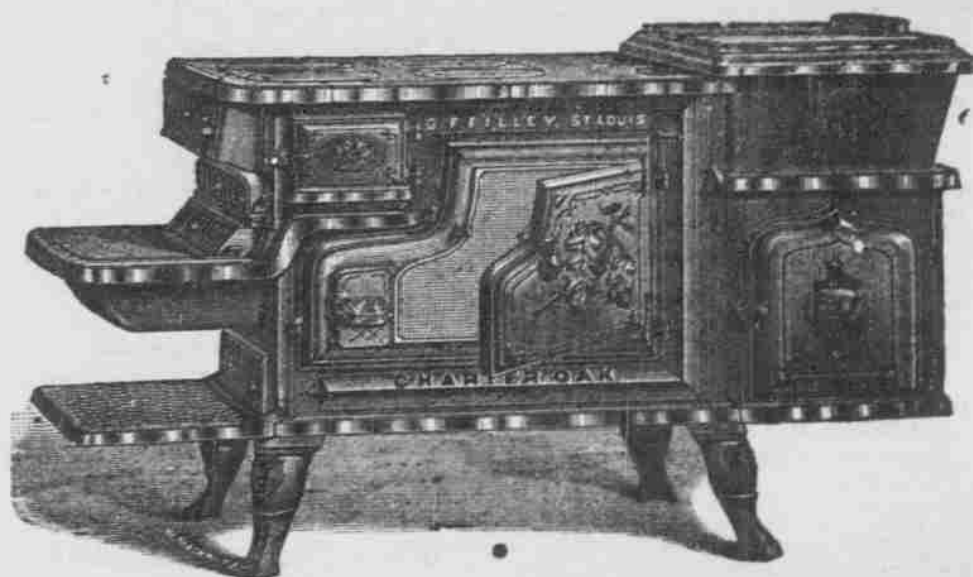
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